BRAVEHEARTS

PADMINI

Hers was a face that made powerful monarchs lose their wits. Having seen Padmini's reflection in a mirror, Sultan Ala-ud-din Khilji wanted her more than anything else in the world. But she was already the queen of brave Ratnasen, ruler of Chittor. In an unfolding drama of lust and treachery, Ratnasen's band of Rajput warriors displayed the outstanding courage for which they were rightly famous. And Padmini showed the world what love and honour mean to a woman.

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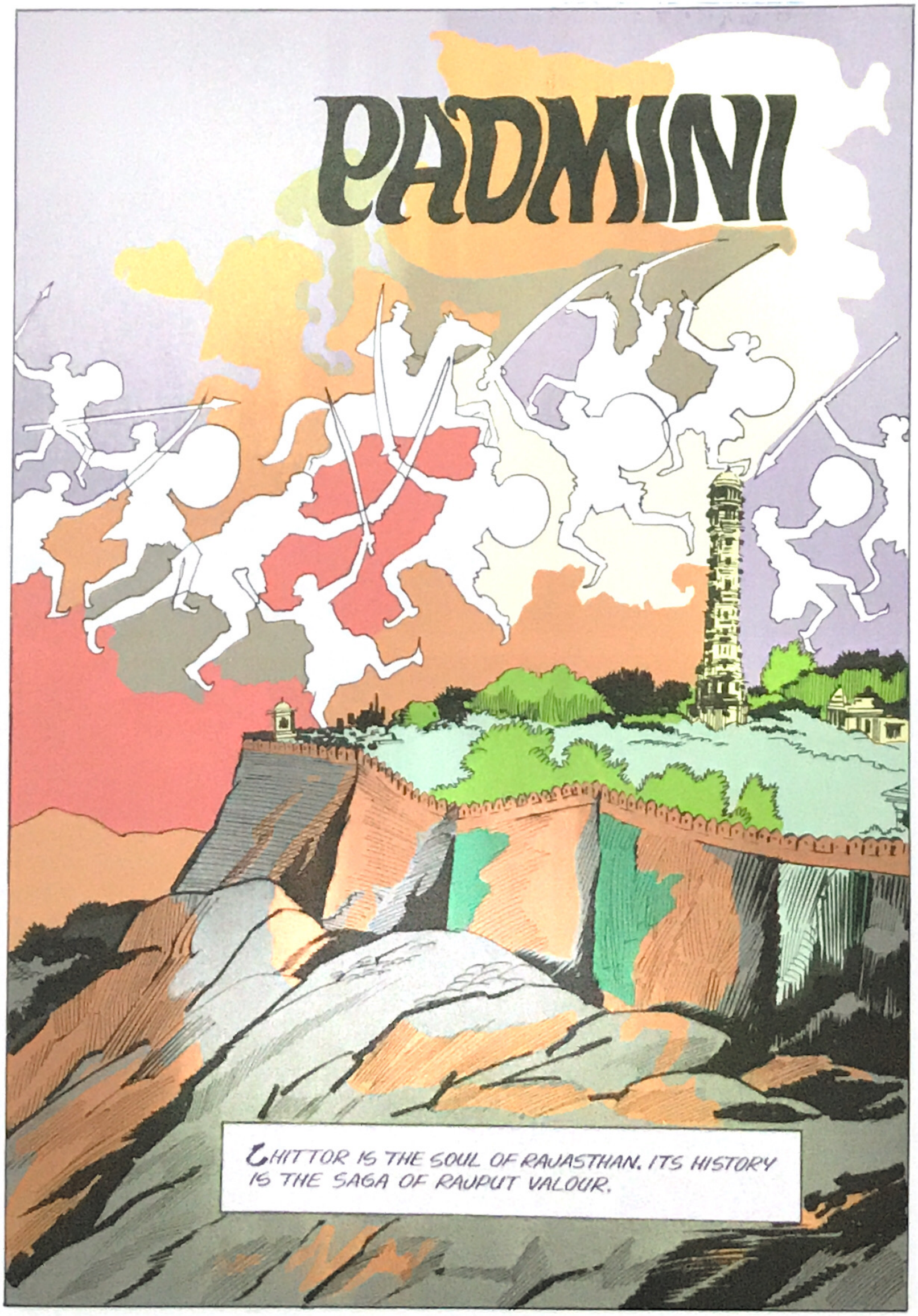


RAJA RATNASEN, A VALIANT RULER OF CHITTOR WAS ALSO A LOVER OF MUSIC.

EXCELLENT! ENCORE!

HE WAS ALSO A LOVER OF BEAUTY AND FINE-ARTS.

BEAUTIFUL! THIS CALLS FOR A HANDSOME REWARD FROM ME.

YOU ARE VERY KIND, MAHARAJ.

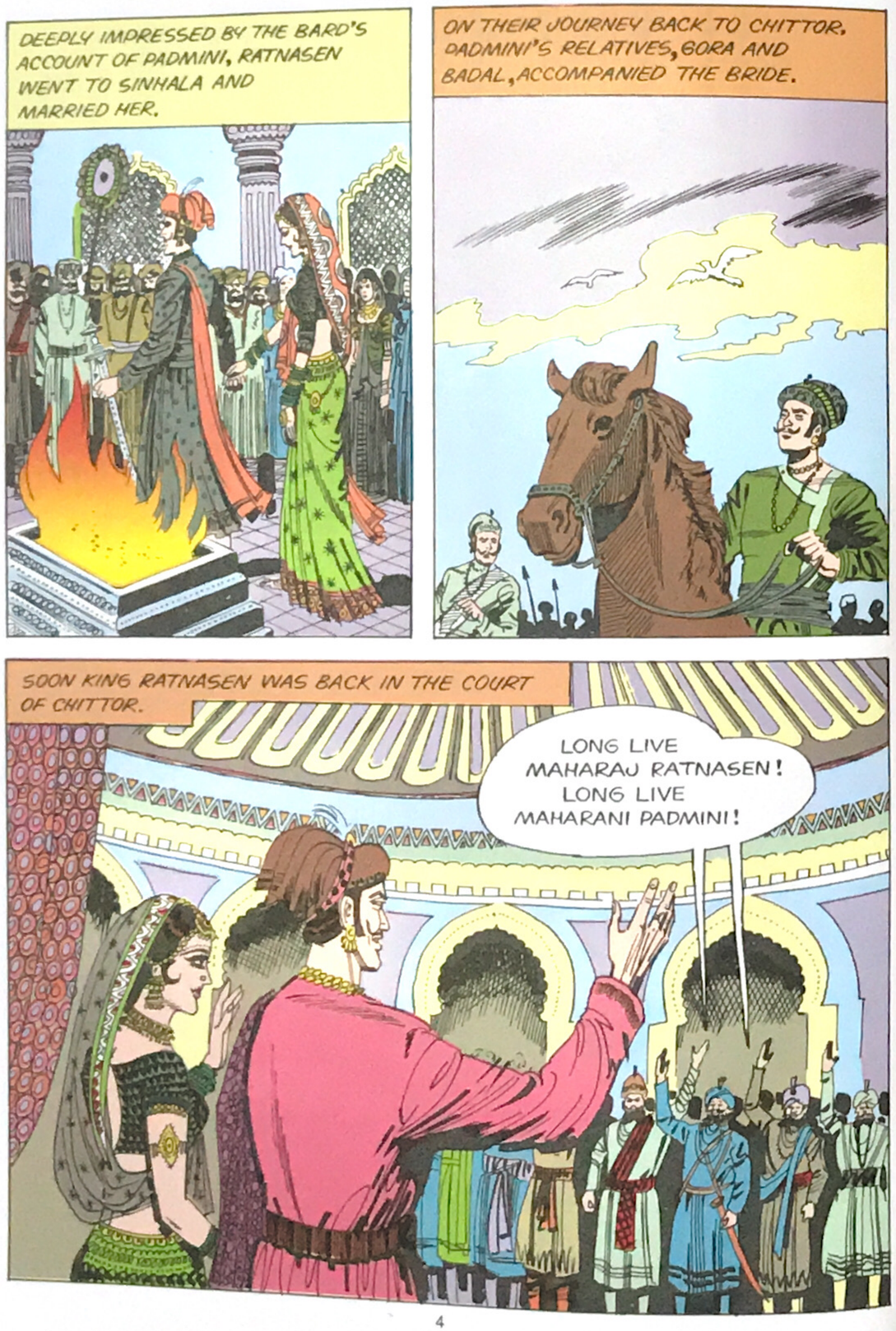
ONE DAY, A BARD CAME TO HIS COURT.

MAHARAJ, THESE OBJECTS ARE BEAUTIFUL. I HAVE YET TO SEE A FINER COLLECTION.

...BUT, PARDON ME, MAHARAJ, NOTHING HERE EQUALS THE BEAUTY OF PADMINI.

PADMINI?

YES, MAHARAJ, PADMINI THE PRINCESS OF SINHALA ISLAND.


DEEPLY IMPRESSED BY THE BARD'S ACCOUNT OF PADMINI, RATNASEN WENT TO SINHALA AND MARRIED HER.
ON THEIR JOURNEY BACK TO CHITTOR, PADMINI'S RELATIVES, GORA AND BADAL, ACCOMPANIED THE BRIDE.
SOON KING RATNASEN WAS BACK IN THE COURT OF CHITTOR.
LONG LIVE MAHARAJ RATNASEN! LONG LIVE MAHARANI PADMINI!

AMONG RATNASEN'S COURTIERS WAS A SCHOLAR NAMED RAGHAV CHETAN. ONE DAY–
WHEN IS THE SECOND DAY OF THE MOON?
TODAY, MAHARAJ!
BUT RAGHAV CHETAN HAD MADE A MISTAKE IN HIS CALCULATIONS.
NO MAHARAJ, TODAY IS THE NEW MOON DAY.
WHICH ONE OF YOU IS RIGHT?
BEING A STUBBORN MAN RAGHAV DID NOT ADMIT HIS MISTAKE.
I AM RIGHT, MAHARAJ, YOU SHALL HAVE THE PROOF TONIGHT.
THAT NIGHT RAGHAV USED HIS SORCERY AND–
THERE IT IS, THE MOON OF THE SECOND DAY.
YES, YOU WERE RIGHT!

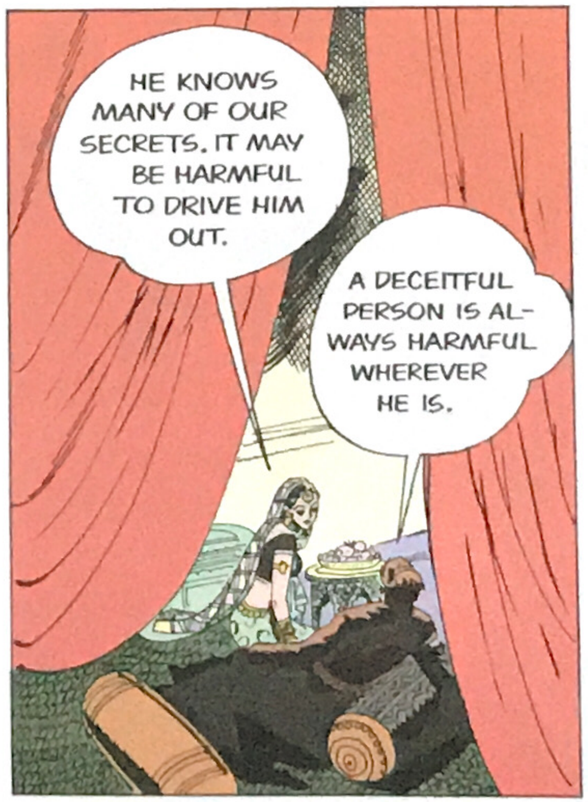
IT IS IMPOSSIBLE. STILL THE IS MOON IS UP THERE...

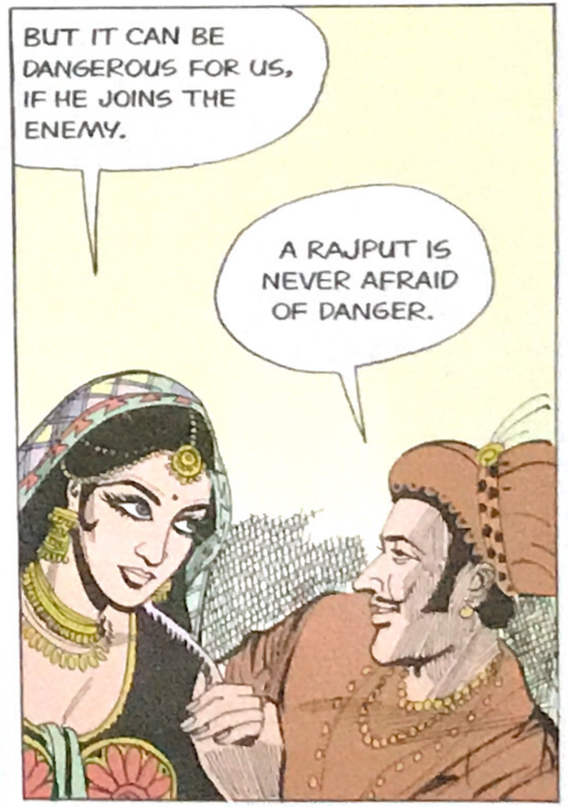
BUT RAGHAV HAD LIED AGAINST THE ETERNAL TRUTH OF NATURE. ON THE ACTUAL SECOND DAY OF THE MOON–
LOOK AT THE MOON, MAHARAJ! TODAY IS THE ACTUAL SECOND DAY OF THE MOON.
INDEED IT IS!

LATER IN THE PALACE, KING RATNASEN DISCUSSED THIS MATTER WITH QUEEN PADMINI.
PANDIT RAGHAV CHETAN HAD DECEIVED YOU.
YES. I SHALL PUNISH HIM FOR IT. I SHALL DRIVE HIM OUT OF MY KINGDOM.

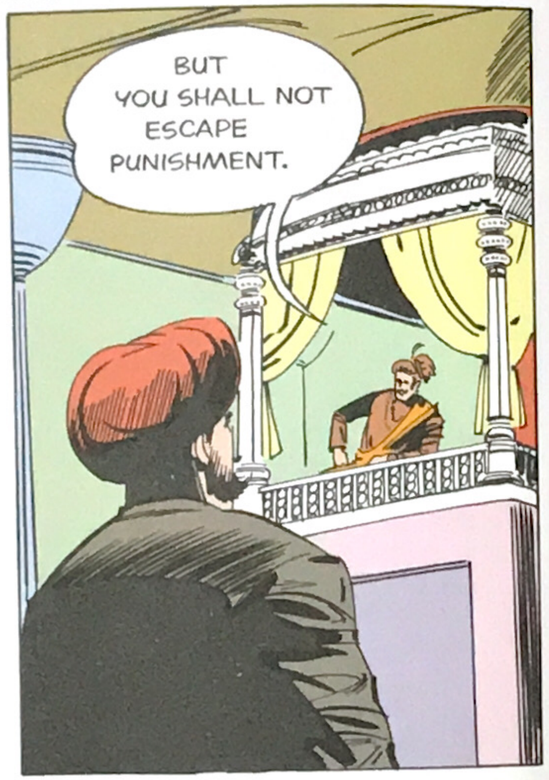
DON'T PUNISH HIM. HE MIGHT CHANGE HIS WAYS.
A SIMPLE MAN, WHO KNOWS NOT WHAT HE DOES SHOULD BE PARDONED!

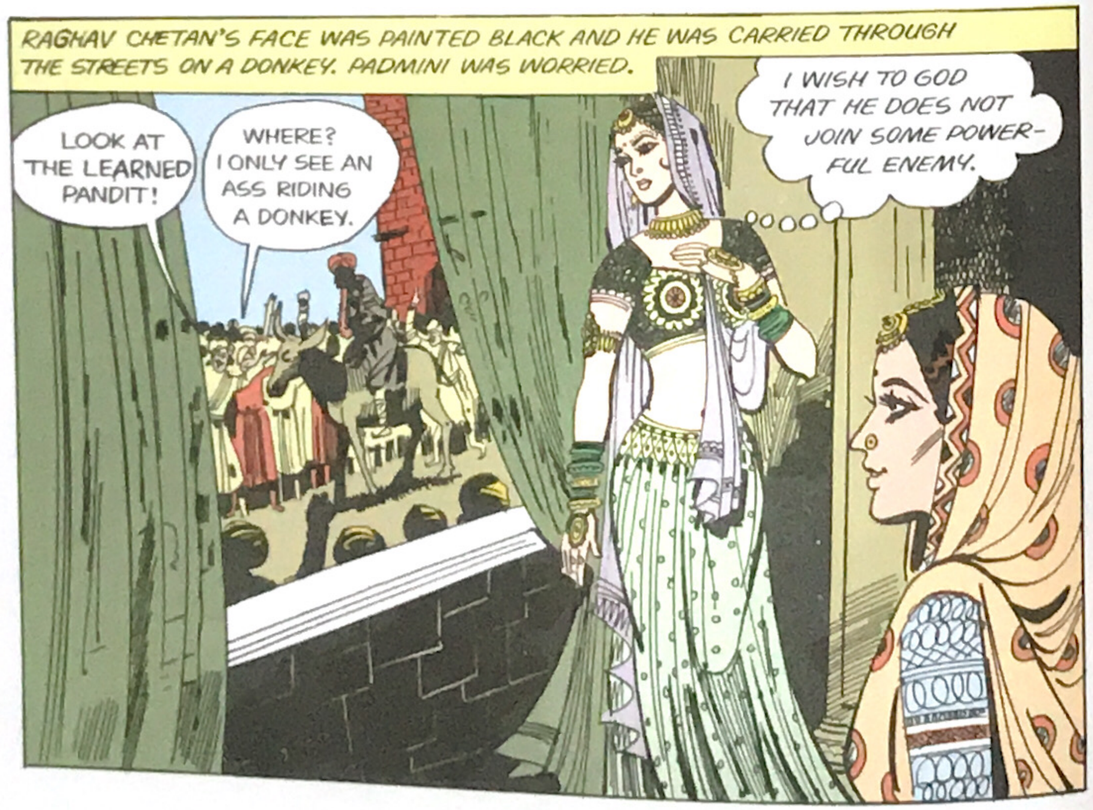
BUT A LEARNED MAN LIKE RAGHAV SHOULD BE PUNISHED FOR HIS CLEVER LIES.

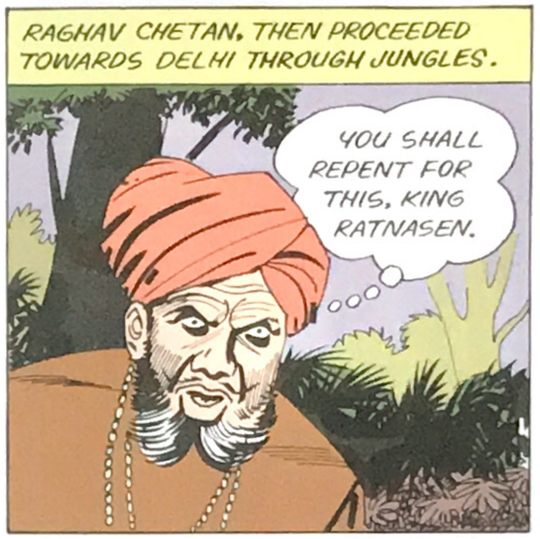

HE KNOWS MANY OF OUR SECRETS. IT MAY BE HARMFUL TO DRIVE HIM OUT.
A DECEITFUL PERSON IS ALWAYS HARMFUL WHEREVER HE IS.


BUT IT CAN BE DANGEROUS FOR US, IF HE JOINS THE ENEMY.
A RAJPUT IS NEVER AFRAID OF DANGER.

NEXT DAY IN THE COURT–
PANDIT RAGHAV CHETAN, SINCE YOU ARE A BRAHMAN, I SHALL NOT HAVE YOU KILLED.


BUT YOU SHALL NOT ESCAPE PUNISHMENT.


RAGHAV CHETAN'S FACE WAS PAINTED BLACK AND HE WAS CARRIED THROUGH THE STREETS ON A DONKEY. PADMINI WAS WORRIED.
LOOK AT THE LEARNED PANDIT!
WHERE? I ONLY SEE AN ASS RIDING A DONKEY.
I WISH TO GOD THAT HE DOES NOT JOIN SOME POWERFUL ENEMY.

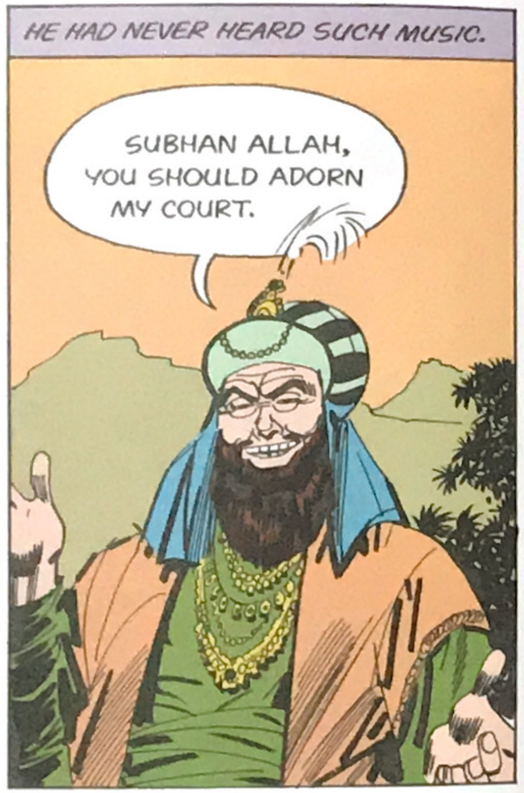

RAGHAV CHETAN, THEN PROCEEDED TOWARDS DELHI THROUGH JUNGLES.
YOU SHALL REPENT FOR THIS, KING RATNASEN.

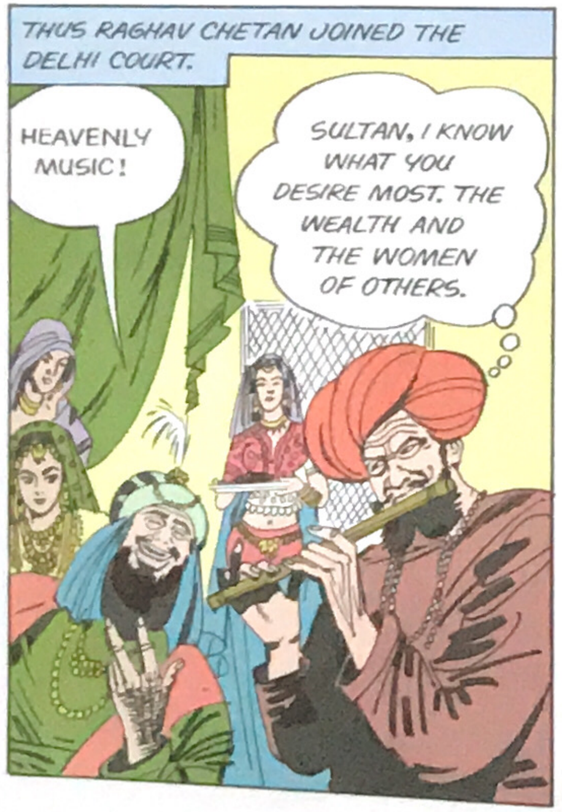
ALA-UD-DIN, THE SULTAN OF DELHI, WAS HUNTING IN THE SAME JUNGLE.

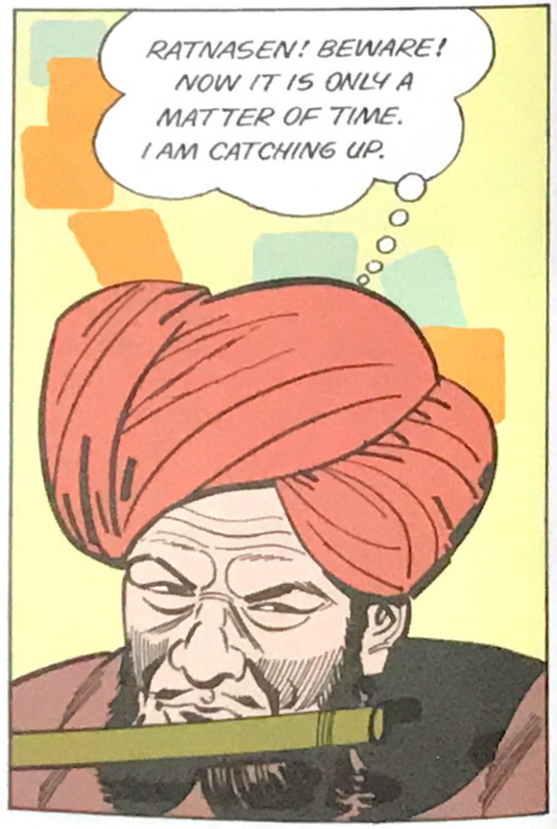
SUDDENLY A MELODIOUS TUNE FILLED THE JUNGLE AIR.

THE HERD OF DEER RAN IN THE DIRECTION FROM WHICH THE MUSIC CAME. FASCINATED, ALA-UD-DIN FOLLOWED THE DEER.

THE DEER STOPPED IN FRONT OF RAGHAV PLAYING HIS FLUTE. THEY WERE HYPNOTISED. SO WAS THE SULTAN.


HE HAD NEVER HEARD SUCH MUSIC.
SUBHAN ALLAH, YOU SHOULD ADORN MY COURT.


THUS RAGHAV CHETAN JOINED THE DELHI COURT.
HEAVENLY MUSIC!
SULTAN, I KNOW WHAT YOU DESIRE MOST. THE WEALTH AND THE WOMEN OF OTHERS.


RATNASEN! BEWARE! NOW IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME. I AM CATCHING UP.

ONE DAY A HUNTER PRESENTED A RABBIT TO THE SULTAN.
THERE CAN BE NOTHING MORE DELICATE THAN THIS CREATURE.
YOU ARE WRONG, SULTAN.

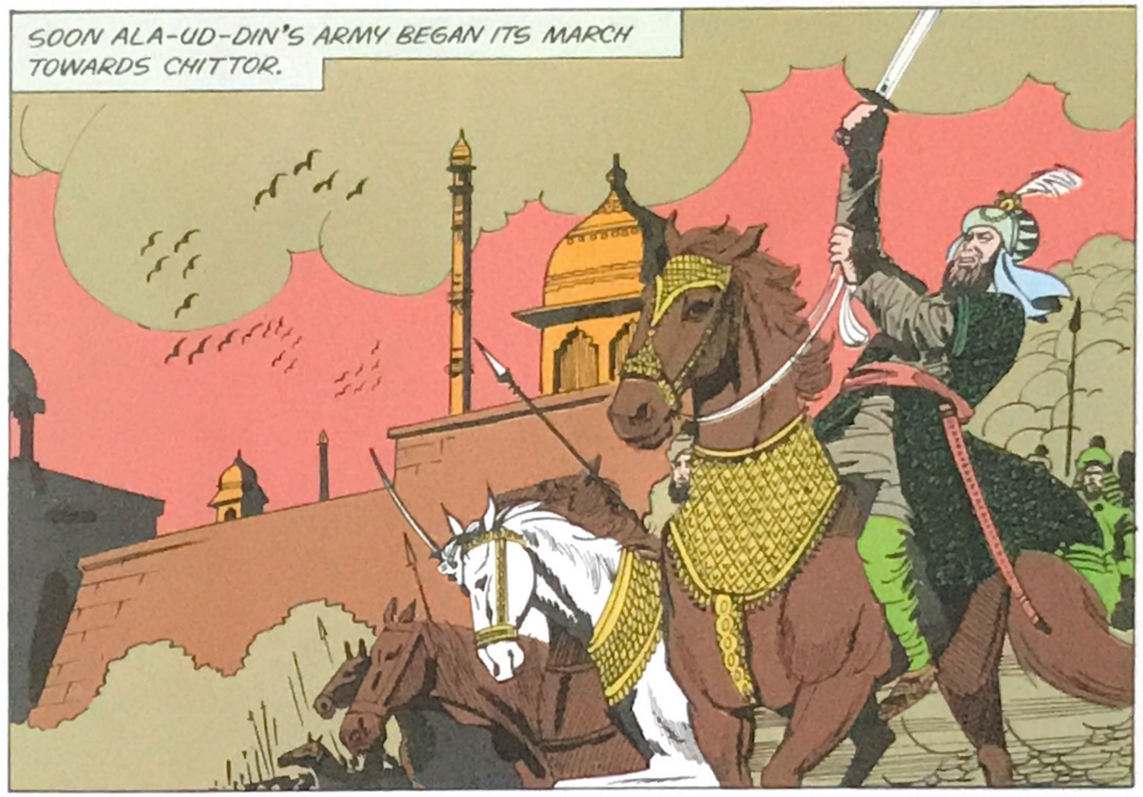
PADMINI, THE QUEEN OF CHITTOR IS. SHE IS THE MOST DELICATE AND BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN THIS WORLD.

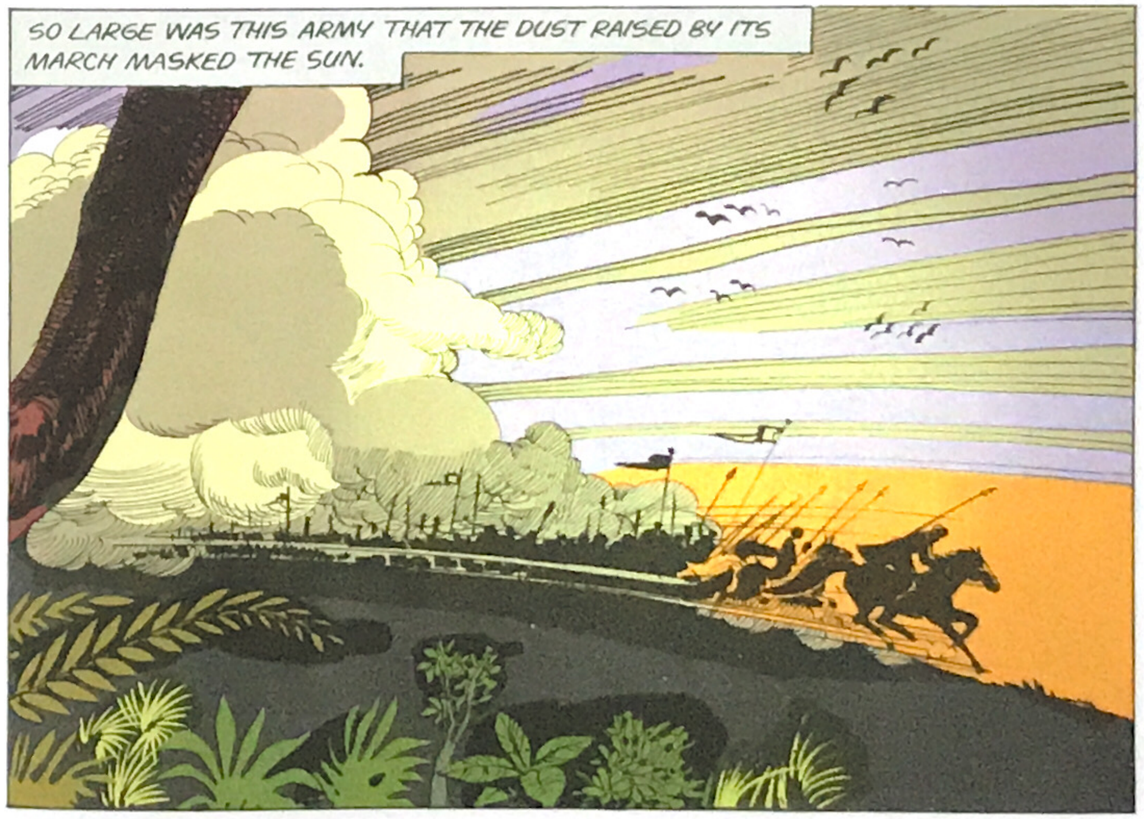
ARE YOU SURE? I HAVE TWO THOUSAND EXTREMELY BEAUTIFUL BEGUMS. SURELY PADMINI CAN'T BE MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN ALL OF THEM.

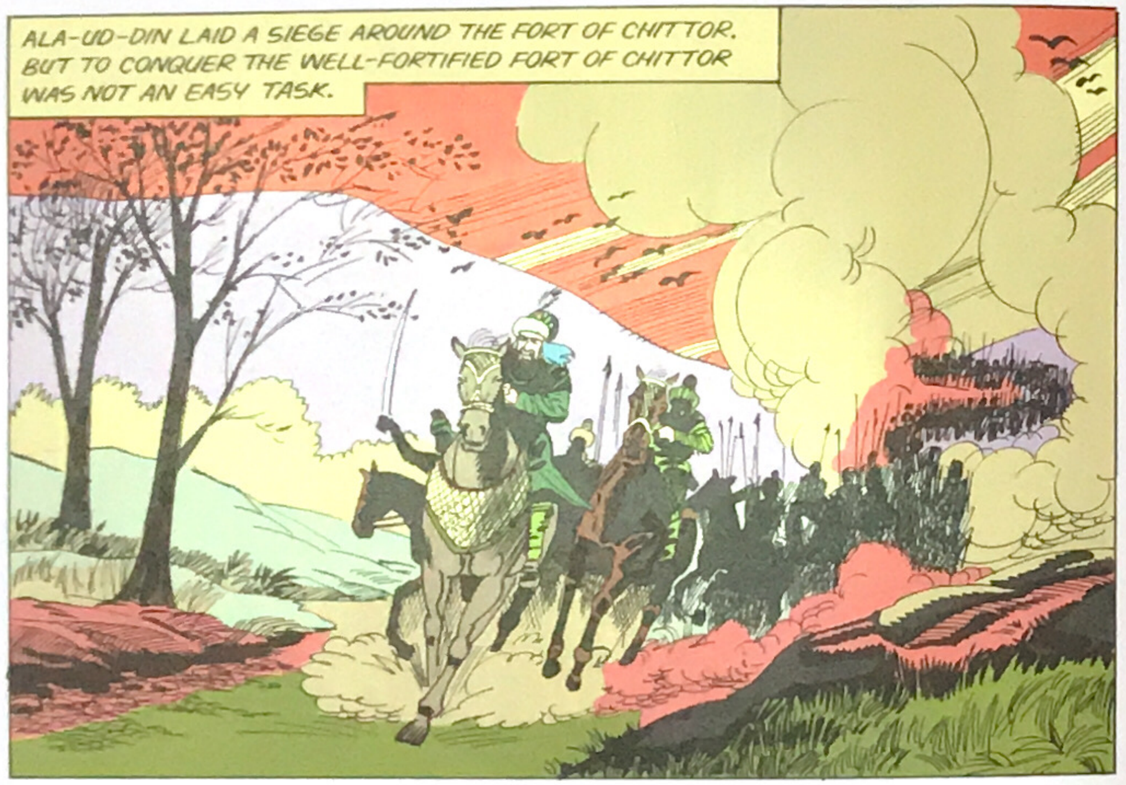
NO SULTAN, I INSIST THAT PADMINI IS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN THE WORLD.

THERE AND THEN ALA-UD-DIN MADE A DECISION.
WELL THEN, PADMINI SHOULD BE IN MY HAREM.
AND CHITTOR UNDER YOUR RULE.

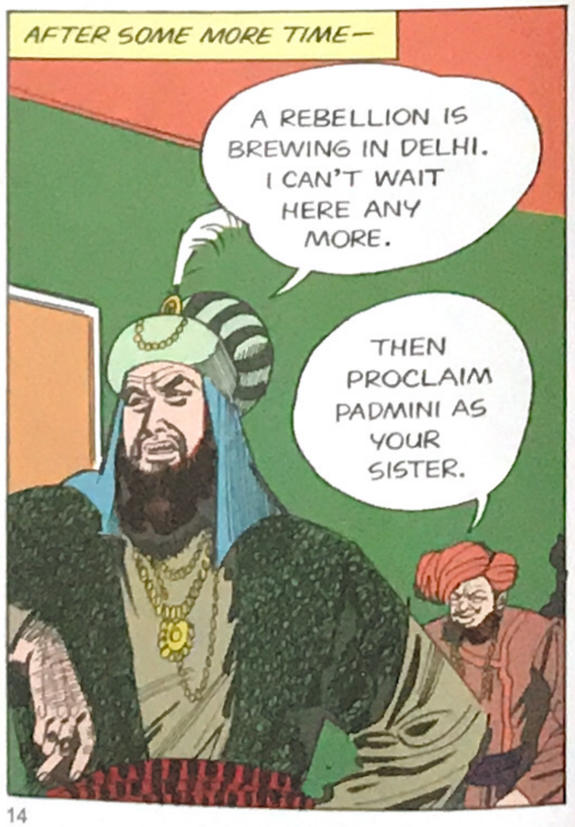
YES, A NEW KINGDOM AND THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN! I CAN KILL TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE.

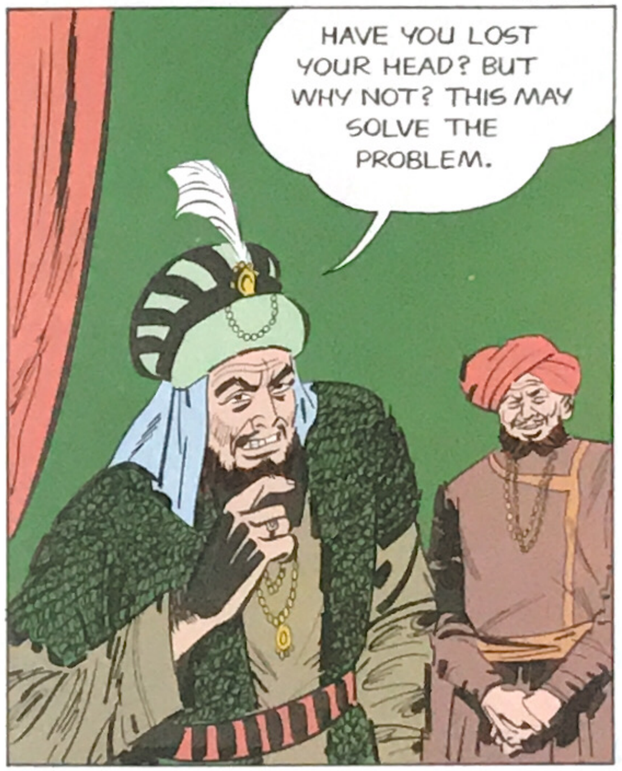

SOON ALA-UD-DIN'S ARMY BEGAN ITS MARCH TOWARDS CHITTOR.


SO LARGE WAS THIS ARMY THAT THE DUST RAISED BY ITS MARCH MASKED THE SUN.

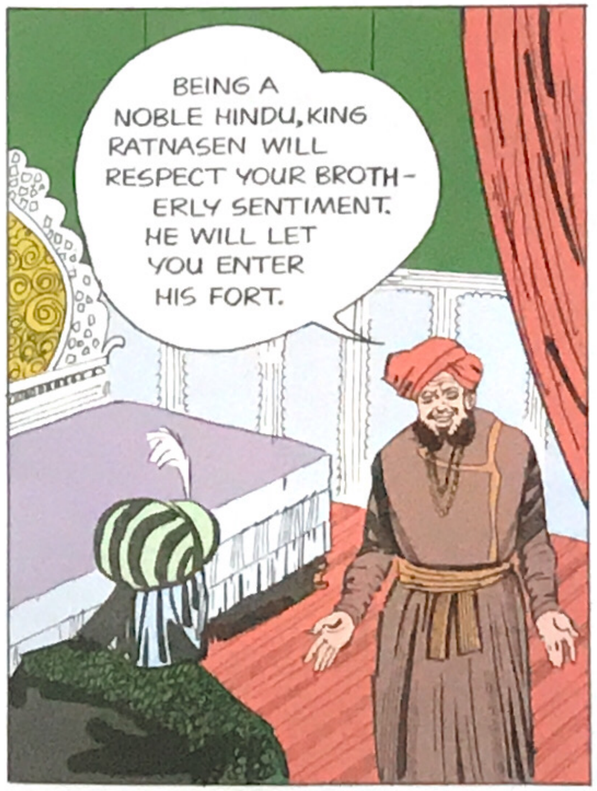

ALA-UD-DIN LAID A SIEGE AROUND THE FORT OF CHITTOR. BUT TO CONQUER THE WELL-FORTIFIED FORT OF CHITTOR WAS NOT AN EASY TASK.

AFTER A LONG WAIT–
WE CAN'T STAY HERE FOREVER.
HAVE PATIENCE, SULTAN. FRUITS OF PATIENCE ARE ALWAYS SWEET.

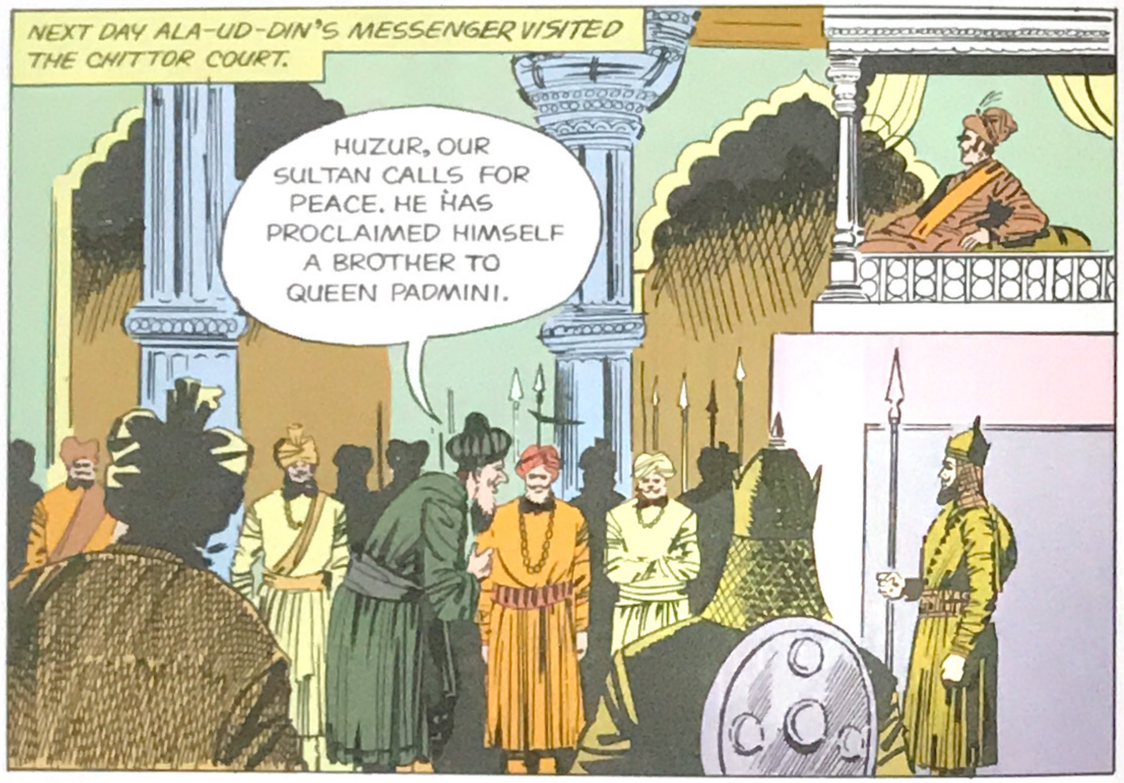

AFTER SOME MORE TIME–
A REBELLION IS BREWING IN DELHI. I CAN'T WAIT HERE ANY MORE.
THEN PROCLAIM PADMINI AS YOUR SISTER.

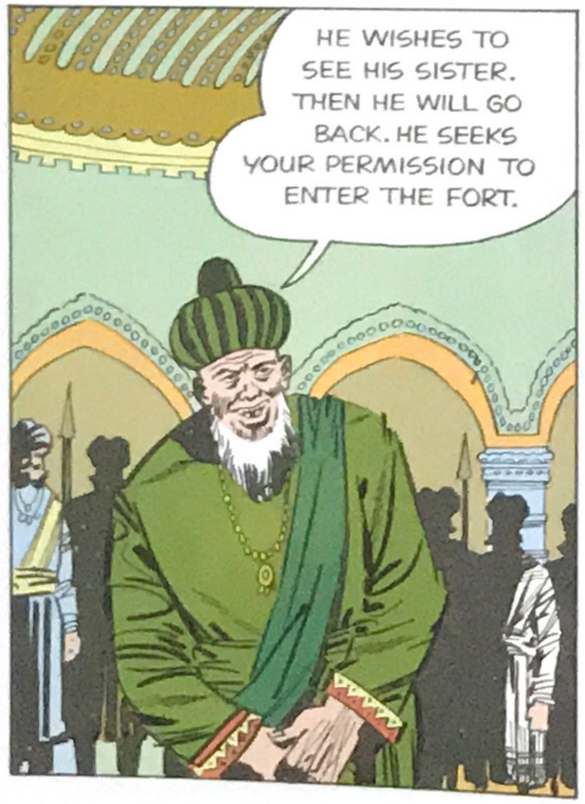

HAVE YOU LOST YOUR HEAD? BUT WHY NOT? THIS MAY SOLVE THE PROBLEM.

IF I PROCLAIM HER MY SISTER, CAN I MEET PADMINI?
OF COURSE!


BEING A NOBLE HINDU, KING RATNASEN WILL RESPECT YOUR BROTHERLY SENTIMENT. HE WILL LET YOU ENTER HIS FORT.

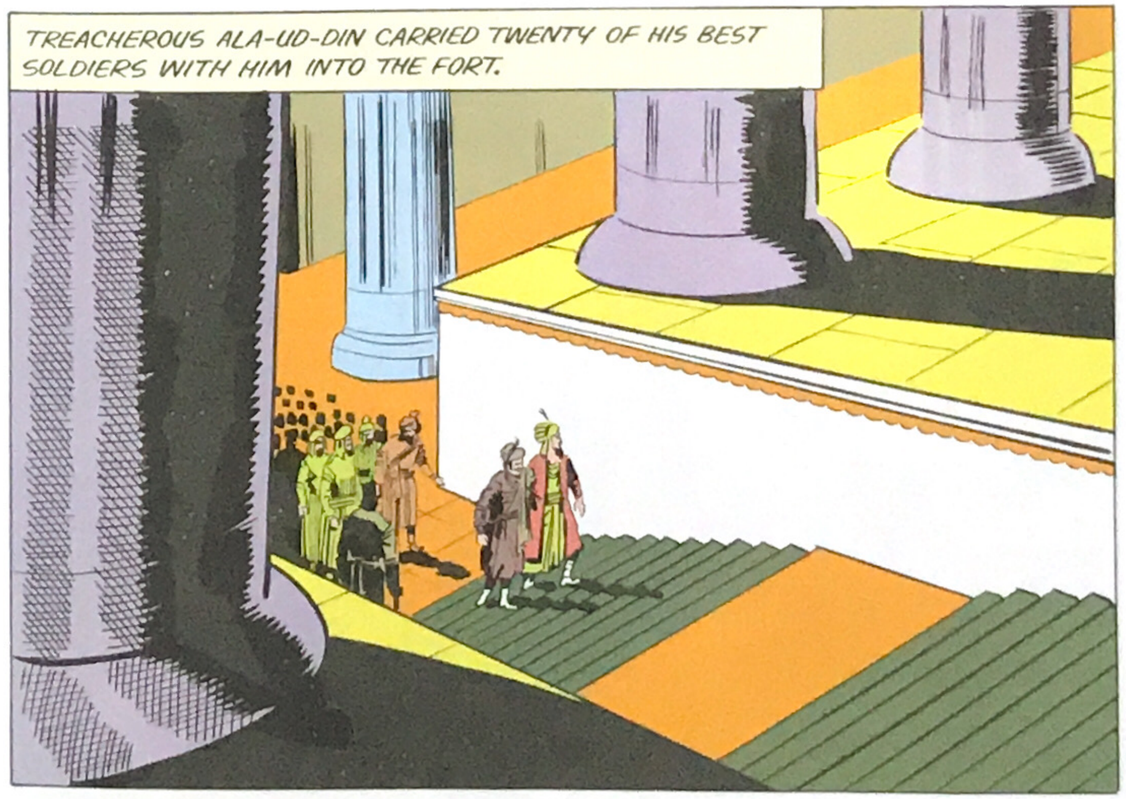
AND THEN I CAN CAPTURE THE STUPID KING AND PADMINI SHALL BE MINE.

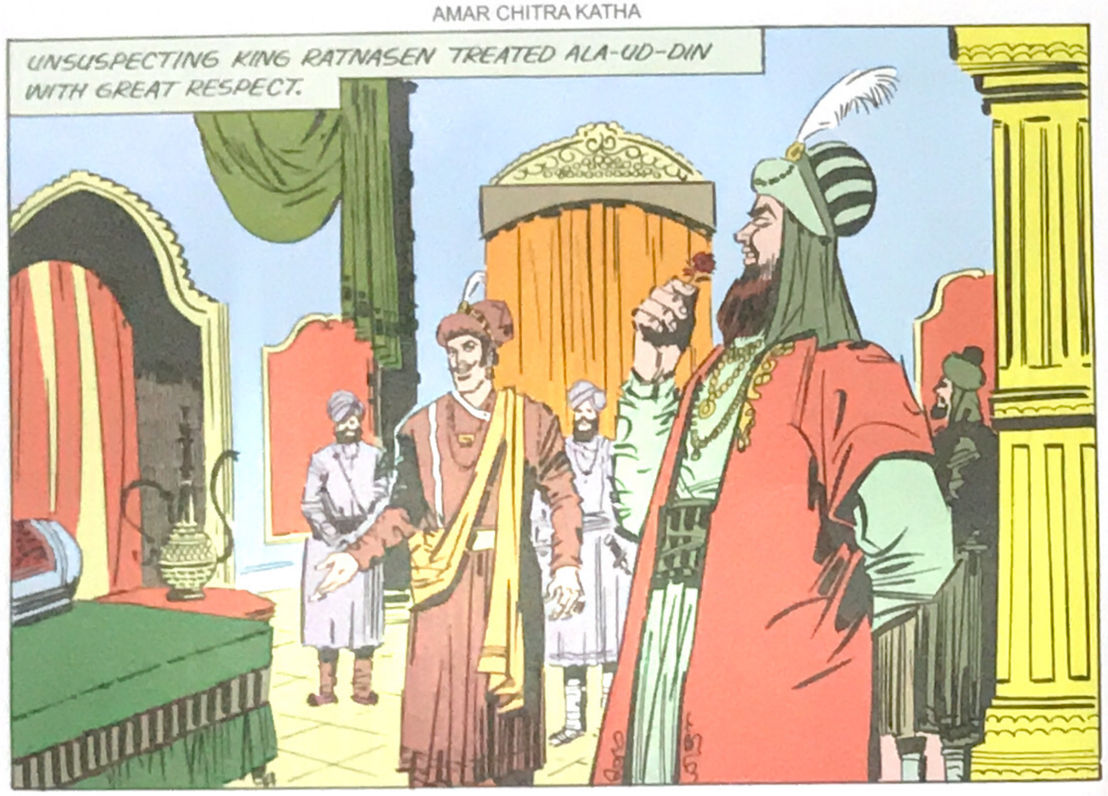

NEXT DAY ALA-UD-DIN'S MESSENGER VISITED THE CHITTOR COURT.
HUZUR, OUR SULTAN CALLS FOR PEACE. HE HAS PROCLAIMED HIMSELF A BROTHER TO QUEEN PADMINI.


HE WISHES TO SEE HIS SISTER. THEN HE WILL GO BACK. HE SEEKS YOUR PERMISSION TO ENTER THE FORT.

A BROTHER NEEDS NO PERMISSION TO MEET HIS SISTER. YOUR SULTAN IS MOST WELCOME.

NEXT DAY...
MY WIFE'S BROTHER IS MOST WELCOME IN MY HOME.
I AM HONOURED.


TREACHEROUS ALA-UD-DIN CARRIED TWENTY OF HIS BEST SOLDIERS WITH HIM INTO THE FORT.


UNSUSPECTING KING RATNASEN TREATED ALA-UD-DIN WITH GREAT RESPECT.

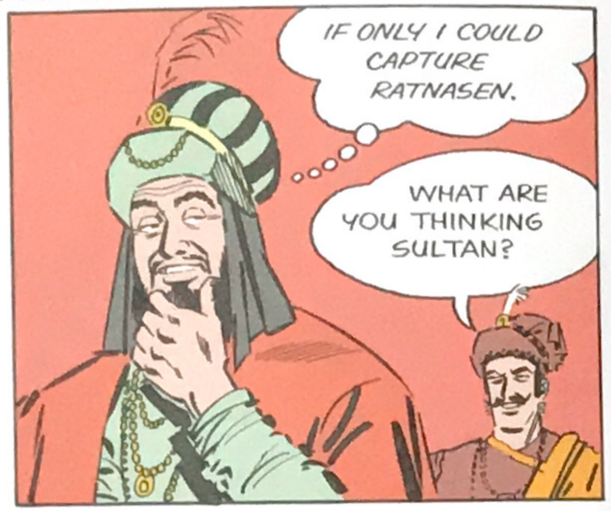
INFORM MAHARANI PADMINI THAT HER BROTHER HAS ARRIVED.
AS YOU WISH MAHARAJ!

WHEN PADMINI DID NOT COME, RATNASEN HIMSELF WENT TO CALL HER.
NO, I WILL NOT SHOW HIM MY FACE, HE IS AN EVIL MAN.

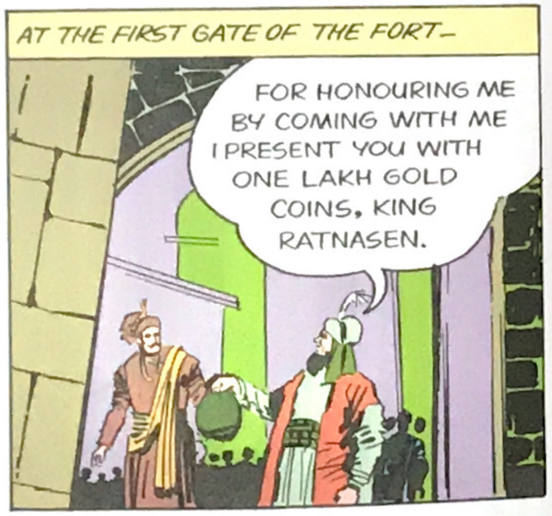
NO ONE CASTS AN EVIL EYE ON HIS SISTER. COME, OTHERWISE HE WILL FEEL INSULTED.
I SHALL SHOW HIM MY FACE BUT... ONLY IN A MIRROR.

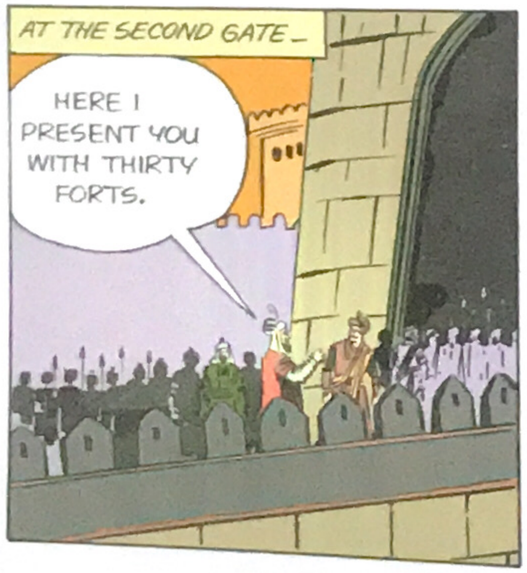
ALA-UD-DIN WAS ASTONISHED BY PADMINI'S BEAUTY.
WHAT A DIVINE BEAUTY.

I MUST HAVE HER. BUT HOW?

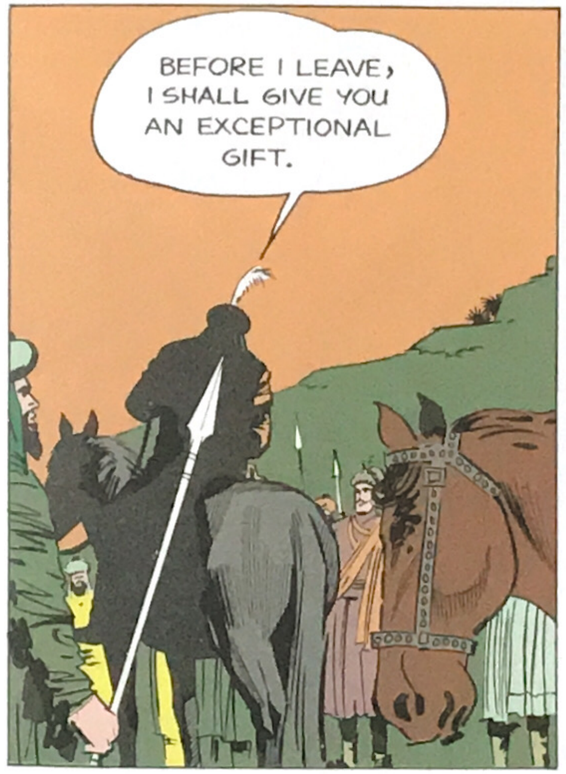

IF ONLY I COULD CAPTURE RATNASEN.
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING SULTAN?

OH, I WAS THINKING I SHOULD LEAVE NOW.
COME, I SHALL SEE YOU TO THE GATE.

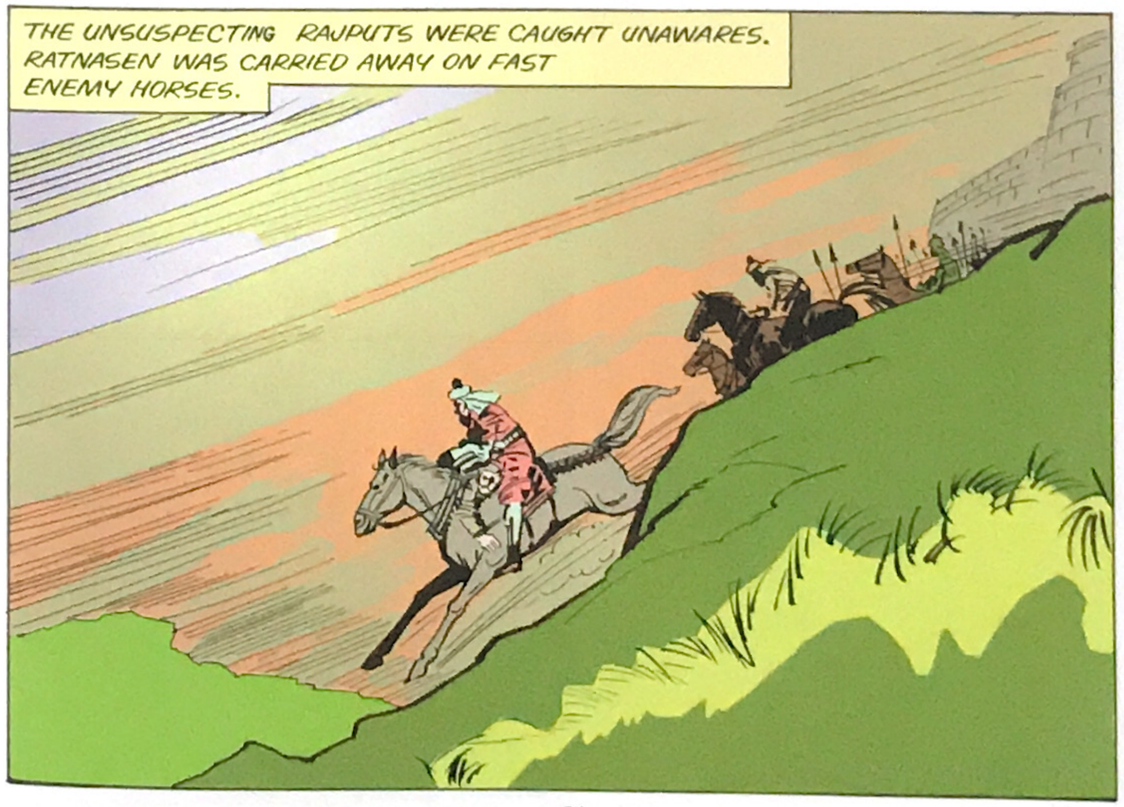

AT THE FIRST GATE OF THE FORT–
FOR HONOURING ME BY COMING WITH ME I PRESENT YOU WITH ONE LAKH GOLD COINS, KING RATNASEN.


AT THE SECOND GATE –
HERE I PRESENT YOU WITH THIRTY FORTS.

PLEASE COME AGAIN.
I WILL!


BEFORE I LEAVE, I SHALL GIVE YOU AN EXCEPTIONAL GIFT.

... ARREST HIM!


THE UNSUSPECTING RAJPUTS WERE CAUGHT UNAWARES. RATNASEN WAS CARRIED AWAY ON FAST ENEMY HORSES.

KING OF CHITTOR, DO YOU LIKE MY LAST GIFT?
I COULD HAVE DONE THE SAME TO YOU, BUT WE ARE NOT TREACHEROUS.

KEEP YOUR NOBILITY TO YOURSELF. NOW I SHALL HAVE PADMINI WITH YOUR CO-OPERATION.
NEVER!

TAKE GOOD CARE OF HIM.

AAH!

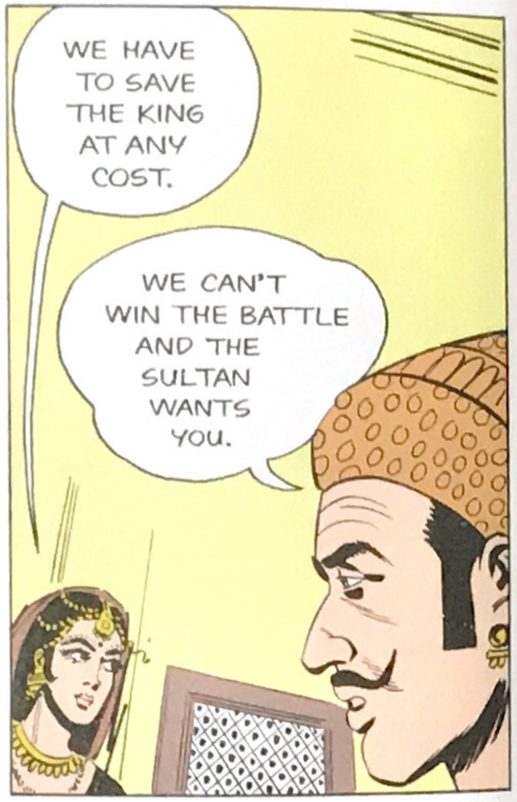
WILL YOU NOW ASK PADMINI TO SUBMIT?
NEVER!

ALA-UD-DIN CHANGED HIS TACTICS.
INFORM PADMINI THAT IF SHE SUBMITS TO ME, HER HUSBAND SHALL LIVE.

SOON THE MESSENGER WAS IN CHITTOR FORT.
IT IS EITHER MY HUSBAND OR MY HONOUR. WHAT SHALL I DO?

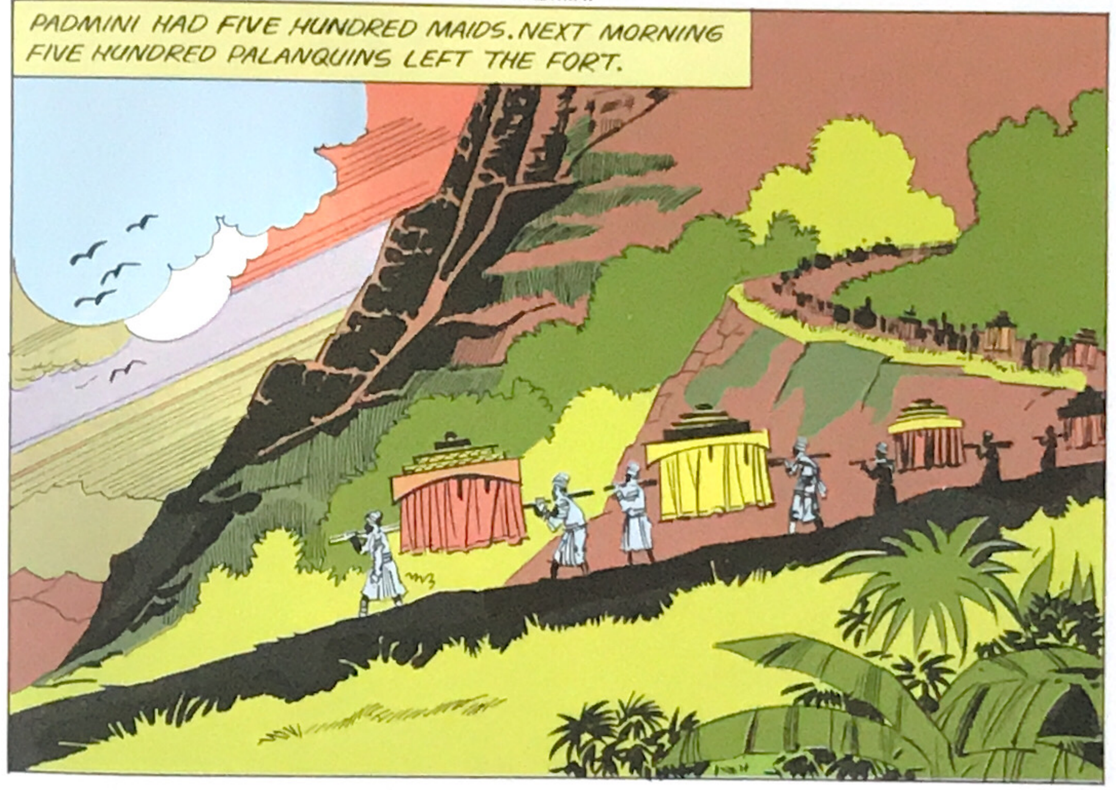
DESPERATE PADMINI ASKED HER RELATIVES, GORA AND BADAL, TO HELP HER.
DO NOT WORRY. WE SHALL DO EVERYTHING TO SAVE THE KING AND YOUR HONOUR.

BUT HOW TO FACE THE SULTAN?
YES, HIS FORCES ARE VERY STRONG.


WE HAVE TO SAVE THE KING AT ANY COST.
WE CAN'T WIN THE BATTLE AND THE SULTAN WANTS YOU.

PADMINI MADE A DESPERATE DECISION_
INFORM YOUR SULTAN THAT I SHALL COME TO HIM, BUT...
...BEFORE THAT HE MUST ALLOW ME TO MEET MY HUSBAND ALONE.

YES. IF YOU WILL NOT BE ACCOMPANIED BY ANY SOLDIERS.
OUR QUEEN WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY ONLY HER MAIDS.


PADMINI HAD FIVE HUNDRED MAIDS. NEXT MORNING FIVE HUNDRED PALANQUINS LEFT THE FORT.

PADMINI'S PALANQUIN WAS CARRIED TO PRISONER RATNASEN'S TENT.

KING RATNASEN WAS VERY UPSET.
MY WIFE, HERE? WHAT A SHAME?

I AM NOT YOUR WIFE MAHARAJ, I AM BADAL.
WE HAVE COME TO RESCUE YOU.

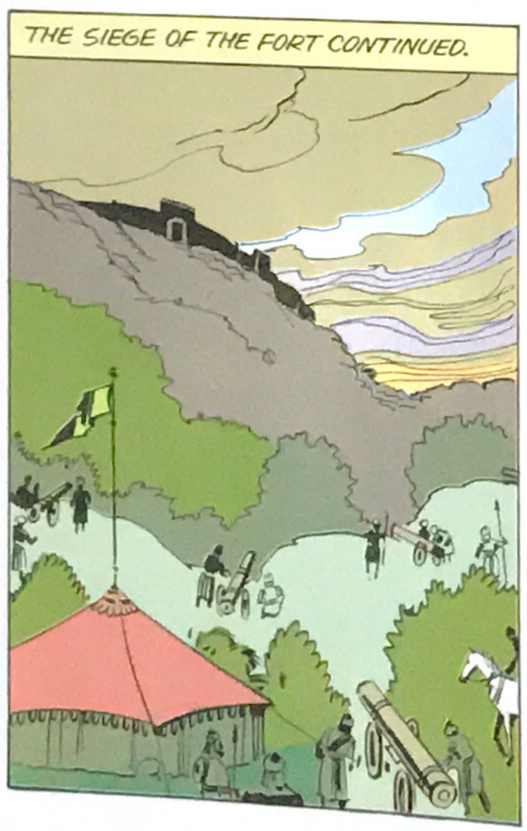
RATNASEN WAS RELEASED AND RUSHED TOWARDS THE FORT. GORA DRESSED AS A PALANQUIN BEARER GAVE THE SIGNAL.

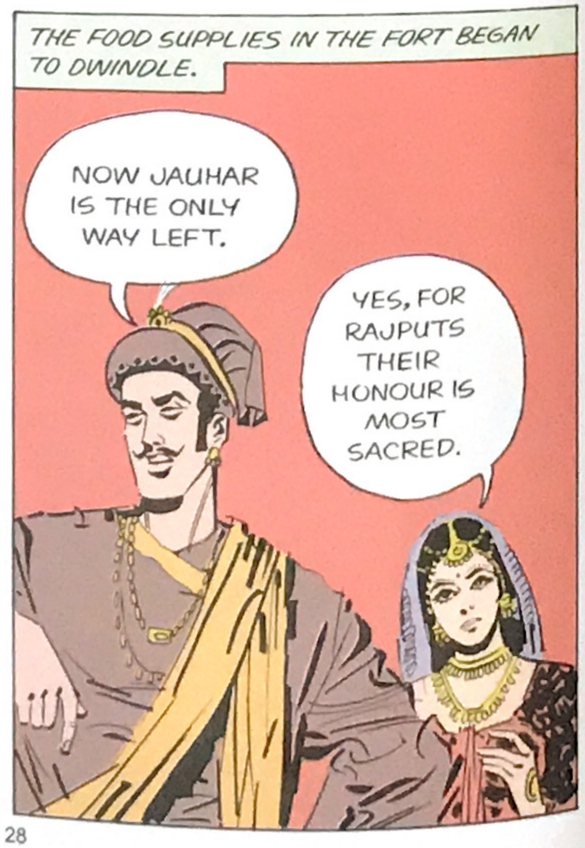
RATNASEN REACHED THE FORT SAFELY.

BUT GORA WAS KILLED IN THE BATTLE.

ALA-UD-DIN WAS FURIOUS.
SOLDIERS DRESSED AS WOMEN AND SERVANTS! THEY MADE FOOLS OF US.

I MUST AVENGE THIS INSULT.


THE SIEGE OF THE FORT CONTINUED.


THE FOOD SUPPLIES IN THE FORT BEGAN TO DWINDLE.
NOW JAUHAR IS THE ONLY WAY LEFT.
YES, FOR RAJPUTS THEIR HONOUR IS MOST SACRED.

SO, HUGE PYRES WERE LIT INSIDE THE FORT.
NO SACRIFICE IS TOO BIG TO SAVE ONE'S HONOUR!

SO, PADMINI LED THE RAJPUT LADIES TO JAUHAR, THE GREAT SACRIFICE BY SELF-IMMOLATION.

THE RAJPUT WOMEN PREFERRED DEATH TO DISHONOUR.

FINALLY SAFFRON-CLAD RAJPUTS RUSHED OUT TO FIGHT THEIR LAST BATTLE.

AFTER THEIR WOMEN HAD PERFORMED JAUHAR, NO RAJPUT HAD ANY DESIRE LEFT TO LIVE. THEY WERE THERE TO DIE, BUT THEY TOOK A HEAVY TOLL OF ENEMY LIVES.

THE SMALL BAND OF RAJPUTS WAS NO MATCH TO THE HUGE ENEMY ARMY. SOON THE BATTLE WAS OVER.

WHY DIDN'T THEY SURRENDER. AGAINST MY ARMY? IT WAS SURE DEATH FOR THEM.

BUT WHAT A GLORIOUS DEATH!

FINALLY ALA-UD-DIN ENTERED THE FORT WITH HIS VICTORIOUS ARMY, TO BE GREETED BY THE SMOULDERING ASHES OF DEATH.

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